



Metropolitan Community Church of Mobile

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DATE: May 23, 1995

TO: Dr. Mona West and persons working on developing a supervised ministry training manual for the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

RE: The following materials are copied with permission from Lee Carroll, Columbia Theological Seminary Director of Supervised Ministry for this purpose.

These training materials were developed out of years of CTS experience with internships and in collaboration with all Presbyterian (USA) seminaries. While certain pages are entirely irrelevant to our UFMCC context, the whole manual provides significant information, guidance, aids and suggestions for our adaptation to our needs. Below are listed a few examples of the kinds of changes we would want to make in developing a manual for our own use.

* The function of Supervised Ministry within the Presbyterian system is very different from how UFMCC uses supervision. Not having a seminary context, the supervised training in our congregations is the primary teaching context. The supervising pastor and the lay members of the teaching congregation are the primary evaluators of a person's readiness for ministry. (A DCRC can only interview effectively when good information is sent to them from these evaluators.) As the UFMCC processes change, it is unlikely that we will change this pivotal role of the supervising pastor and training congregation any time soon. We do not expect Samaritan or any other seminary to prepare our pastors for ministry in UFMCC apart from this experiential training.

* References to "the Seminary" in most cases might have "District" and/or "Fellowship" substituted as the locus of accountability for reporting. Whether UFMCC moves toward district oversight of training or it remains under CCCC (or its successor), it will be the DCRC (or BOM) who will ultimately receive reports of progress in experiential training and readiness for ministry, not Samaritan.

* Pages 48-49 suggest guidelines for Presbyterian polity. We would need to insert our own entirely different policies concerning rites, pastoral leadership and other differences. A short check list of UFMCC process, from entry as a student or transfer clergy, might also prove helpful. Include deadlines for applications, fees and other pertinent information that would be handy to have in a quick reference as a student/ transfer person begins to negotiate time lines and goals with a supervising pastor and congregation. (This would not be a substitute for knowing the UFMCC Bylaws and Clergy Manual requirements but only an aid in quick reference.)

* The shorter manual for a lay supervision committee would need to be adapted for use by a board and any persons they may include as a part of their participation. (Example: Deacons with long experience or particular gifts might be helpful additions to a supervisory committee.)

* There is a real difference between supervising a person who has no previous pastoral experience and a transfer clergy who may have pastored many more years than their supervisor. The dynamics of such diverse relationships, plus our cultural, theological and experiential diversity, mean that some additional parts of a UFMCC manual will have to be created by us. From my perspective, I consider it highly likely that as a supervisor I will also learn much from those I supervise.

* There is great potential for significant congregational and lay leadership growth in following many of the lay committee training steps. My sense is that in the past many lay people have not fully grasped the full import of their role in training clergy or their own leadership responsibilities. Pages 11-12 are a study that any congregation will benefit from doing on a periodic schedule and especially when they are in the process of preparing to look for a new pastor.

* The evaluation questions on the various forms in this manual might be simpler wording for revisions of our UFMCC Clergy Manual forms.

* Most of the focus on evaluation is the continuing development process of those under supervision. People do have trouble with becoming judgmental when trying to give feedback. In the end a clear statement of readiness or unreadiness for ministry is needed but that it is not helpful if made at every evaluation, at regular meetings with the supervisor and laity, during the course of a year of supervision. These manuals are very helpful with suggestions for how to avoid the pitfalls of judgmentalism. (Self-esteem is often a problem for UFMCC people and may merit more emphasis in the training manuals.)

* Time negotiations are going to be different for UFMCC contexts. Most (all?) teaching congregations do not pay their student/transfer clergy who serve part time. Many only have part time pastors who are supervisors. Suggested UFMCC standards for time may be appropriate.

* The criteria for becoming a supervising pastor and teaching congregation might be another place to establish some basic standardization. On the other hand, we have many who do their experiential training as the pastoral leader of one congregation while their supervising pastor may be miles away in a different congregation. Whose responsibility is it then to help the laity do their part? And what happens when there are multiple students/transfers in the same congregation or under the same supervising pastor? We are such a complex denomination because of our rapid growth, our contextual diversity and personnel diversity!

I am certain that if a group of UFMCC supervising clergy, lay leaders from teaching congregations and people in various stages of the credentialling process were to sit down and go through these materials, many, many, MANY(!) more comments and ideas would emerge. Let's have that conversation!

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Supervised Ministry in the Congregation

A Manual for
Supervising Pastors
and
Pastoral Interns



Office of Supervised Ministry
Columbia Theological Seminary
Decatur, Georgia

Supervised Ministry in the Congregation
A Manual for
Supervising Pastors and Pastoral Interns

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THE ROLE OF SUPERVISED MINISTRY

Supervised Ministry is that part of the Columbia curriculum which seeks to integrate what students learn about the tradition of the Church and theories of ministry, with what they learn through the actual practice of ministry in a supervised context.

Academic abilities alone are seldom an accurate index of a person's ability to function effectively in the pastoral office. This is especially true when one's understanding of ministry has no correlation with his or her actual experiences in ministry, when theory and experience are separated into unrelated spheres of life.

(See Figure 1) In such circumstances theology becomes an abstract, intellectual exercise; and ministry is done outside the rich tradition of the Church and the wisdom of the larger community of faith.

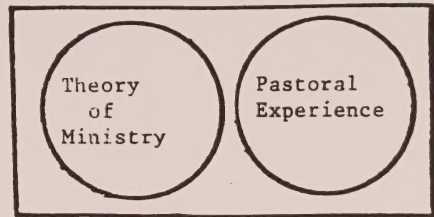


FIGURE 1

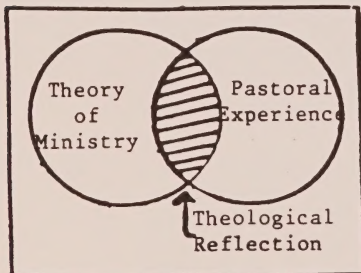


FIGURE 2

Supervised Ministry, then, seeks to bring one's theory of ministry and pastoral experience into serious dialogue with each other. (See Figure 2) Such dialogue is facilitated by ongoing **theological reflection** by the student, the supervising pastor, and others in the congregation. In this process the student, with the help of the supervisor, examines his or her ministry experiences through critical reflection. The goal of this reflection

process is for the student to develop an operative theology which is grounded in *both* biblical vision *and* the realities of engaging in ministry in the contemporary world. The goal of supervised ministry is pastoral integrity.

This process of intentional theological reflection is one significant difference between "supervised ministry" and earlier attempts in "field work" once used in most seminaries. In field work students served in congregations (or other settings) to gain practical experience and financial support, but there was

little or no structured process of theological reflection. Learning was coincidental, not an intentional part of the experience.

Another difference is that "supervised ministry" is not tangential to the Columbia Seminary curriculum. It is vital. The ministry of students is evaluated, and academic credit is awarded for work successfully completed. It becomes a critical means by which students assess their readiness for ministry and needs for further growth.

- the learning goals of the interns
- the needs of the congregation
- the expectations of the supervising pastor, and
- the requirements of the Seminary.

2. In writing a contract, all four of these concerns are matched carefully to form an agreed-upon first, middle, or last experience, and a written "learning agreement" is prepared as a guide to the internship.

At the time of ministry placement, the experience may be modified or extended as well as placed in a different, intentional way to apply the learning objectives and coincide with the learning objectives.

3. Supervision

A. A supervisory relationship must have an explicit, written Supervisory Plan as required by the Seminary. In addition to the plan, the supervisor must observe the intern's work. The supervising pastor is expected to meet with the intern regularly to reflect together about the intern's experience in ministry.

B. Each training congregation is also expected to designate a Supervised Ministry Committee of lay persons or pastors periodically with the intern for theological reflection and feedback. Manuals for members of the committee are available through the Office of Supervised Ministry.

4. Evaluation Process

A. "Evaluation of Internship Structure and Relationships"

At the end of the first month of the internship, the intern and supervisor participate in a process of evaluating the structure and tone of the relationship in the program. Forms for this evaluation are provided by the Office of Supervised Ministry.

COMPONENTS OF A CONGREGATION-BASED INTERNSHIP

1. **The Experience in Ministry.** The experiences of the internship are planned by the student and the supervising pastor with four major concerns in mind:

- the learning goals of the intern;
- the needs of the congregation;
- the expectations of the supervising pastor; and
- the requirements of the Seminary.

2. **A Learning Covenant.** All four of these concerns are examined carefully before or during the first weeks of the internship, and a written "learning covenant" is prepared as a guide to the internship.

As the time of ministry progresses, the covenant may be modified or updated so that it serves as a relevant, functional tool to guide the learning process and ministry with the teaching congregation.

3. **Supervision**

- A. A congregational internship must have an on-site, ordained **Supervising Pastor** approved by the Seminary. In addition to the day-to-day administrative oversight of the intern's work, the supervising pastor is expected to meet with the intern routinely to reflect together about the student's experience in ministry.
- B. Each teaching congregation is also expected to designate a **Supervised Ministry Committee** of lay persons to meet periodically with the intern for theological reflection and feedback. Manuals for members of this committee are available through the Office of Supervised Ministry.

4. **Evaluation Processes.**

- A. **"Evaluation of Internship Structure and Relationships."**

At the end of the first month of the internship, the intern and supervisor participate in a process of evaluating the structure and state of key relationships in the program. Forms for this evaluation are provided by the Office of Supervised Ministry.

B. Evaluation of the Student's Ministry.

Written evaluation of the student is made by the supervising pastor on forms provided by the Seminary.

- In a summer or part-time internship, the evaluation is done once, near the end of the time of service.
- In a full-time, year-long internship, evaluation is done twice, at the mid-point and at the end of the ministry period.

Input from the Supervised Ministry Committee is encouraged for guiding the supervising pastor in preparing a fair and accurate evaluation.

5. **Academic Requirements.** During any internship the student is expected to meet established academic requirements in order to receive credit in the course:

- In *summer or part-time internships* (SM210 or SM620), students must submit to the Seminary written projects as outlined in the course syllabus.
- In the *year-long internship* (SM414) students must return to the Seminary campus for two weeks in January and at the conclusion of the internship to participate in designated seminars.

Criteria for “Teaching Congregations”

To be certified as a "teaching congregation" in Supervised Ministry, the following criteria are used in guiding the approval of intern placements:

1. The congregation must have a **competent, on-site pastor**.
 - Pastor should hold M.Div. or equivalent theological education.
 - Pastor should have been ordained a minimum of three years.
 - Pastor should have a positive relationship and be in good standing with his or her denomination.
 - Pastor should be committed to supervisory responsibilities with the intern's theological education.
2. The Congregation must have a **serious commitment to theological education**.
 - Congregation should appoint a lay committee to help supervise the internship.
 - Congregation should encourage the pastor to invest time and energy in supervising the intern.
 - Congregation should be open to using action-reflection methods of education in looking at life of the congregation as a means of mutual learning.
3. Congregation must provide a **constructive context for learning about ministry**.
 - Congregation should provide work experiences which will enable a theological student to learn about the responsibilities of congregational leadership.
 - Congregation should be in good relationship with its denomination, and not actively involved in schism.
 - Congregation should be receptive to having an intern regardless of gender, race, age, or handicap.
 - Congregation should be engaged in ministry beyond its own membership.

DEFINING SUPERVISION

Supervising Pastors and Interns frequently approach supervision in a way which reflects some of the following:

- previous experiences of being supervised by others;
- circumstances of the specific setting for shared ministry;
- personal hopes and expectations about the supervisor-intern relationship;
- theological understandings about church and mission; and
- preferred styles of learning.

In an effort to bring these influences to conscious awareness, the exercise on the following page is designed to assist pastors and interns develop a working concept of supervision which will inform this working relationship.

A Suggested Exercise for Defining Supervision

- Step 1.** Write a brief statement of your own definition of pastoral supervision. Be concise, but include your response to the following questions:
- What is the primary **goal** of supervision?
 - What is the primary **task** of the supervisor?
 - What is the **focus** of attention in the supervisory conference?
 - What is the nature of the **relationship**?
 - Who is the **dominant person** in this relationship? Who, if anyone, is in charge?
- Step 2.** Answer the "Supervision Questionnaire" on p. 8 following the stated instructions.
- Step 3.** Turn to the *Models of Supervision* chart on p. 9. Transfer your responses to the questionnaire in Step 2 to this chart. This will help you identify any patterns to your supervisory preferences. (Many persons find that they work out of several models on this chart.)
- Step 4.** Read the following:
- *Definitions of Supervision* (p. 10)
 - *Guide to Supervision in Field Education* (p. 11), and
 - *The Role of the Supervisor* (p. 13).
- Note any concepts of significance which you want to include in your own definition of supervision.
- Step 5.** Write a final version of your own definition of supervision, incorporating insights from Steps 3 and 4 above.

SUPERVISION QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: *This questionnaire is designed to help you identify preferred models of supervision. Select the one lettered item under each question that best fits your concept of supervision, and circle the letter.*

1. What is the **primary goal** of supervision?
 - A. to accomplish tasks assigned to the intern.
 - B. to transfer knowledge from the supervisor to intern.
 - C. to teach professional skills to the intern.
 - D. to socialize or acclimate the intern into a pastoral vocation.
 - E. to increase the intern's ability to use resources for ministry.
 - F. to help the intern clarify and/or solve own problems.
 - G. to discern God's activity in experiences.
2. What is the **primary task** of the supervisor?
 - A. to involve the intern in the supervisor's own work.
 - B. to design a learning context.
 - C. to explore the resources available to the intern.
 - D. to consult with the intern regarding problems.
 - E. to guide the intern in reading life theologically.
 - F. to assign work and hold intern accountable.
3. What should be the general **focus** of supervisor conferences with the intern?
 - A. What, why, and how do you do what you do.
 - B. Professional growth of the intern.
 - C. Relative value of various resources the intern uses.
 - D. Issues, goals, or problems of the intern.
 - E. The intern's experiences and discernment of God.
 - F. Evaluation of the work of the intern.
4. What should be the **primary nature** of the relationship between the supervisor and the intern?
 - A. Mentor/Disciple
 - B. Consultant/Advisee
 - C. Expert/Learner
 - D. Resource Guide/Learner
 - E. Boss/Worker
 - F. Professor/Student
 - G. Experienced Professional/Learner
5. Who should be the **dominant person** in this relationship? Who, if anyone, is in charge?
 - A. The Supervisor
 - B. The Intern
 - C. Both; it is collaborative effort

Models of Supervision

	WORK MODEL	APPRENTICE MODEL	APPRENTICE MODEL	TRAINING MODEL	RESOURCE MODEL	CONSULTATION MODEL	SPIRITUAL GUIDE MODEL
GOAL	Accomplish tasks assigned	Transfer knowledge from Supervisor to Intern	Teach professional skills	Help socialize Intern in a new vocation	Increase Intern's ability to make effective use of resources	Help Intern clarify and/or deal with problem(s)	Help Intern discern God's activity in experiences
SUPERVISOR TASK	To assign work and hold Intern accountable	To design learning context	To involve Intern in Supervisor's Work	To design learning context	To explore available resources with Intern	To consult with Intern	To guide Intern in reading life theologically
FOCUS OF SUPERVISORY CONFERENCE	Work of Intern	Work of Intern	What, why, & how Supervisor does what is done	Professional growth of Intern	Resources being used in Intern's work	Goals & issues of the Intern	Intern's experiences and discernment
RELATIONSHIP	Boss & Worker	Professor & Student	Expert & Novice	Experienced Professional & Learner	Resource Guide & Learner	Consultant & Advisee	Mentor & Disciple
CONTROL	Supervisor	Supervisor	Supervisor	Collaborative with Supervisor's Initiative	Intern	Collaborative with Intern's Initiative	Collaborative

---adapted from Donald F. Beisswenger, "Different Modes in Supervision in Theological Field Education," *Theological Education*, Autumn, 1974, p. 58.

Resistance to Supervision: Four Common Forms

(abstracted from article by David C. Mylon)

	Observed Behavior of the Intern	Behavioral Dynamics	Area of Focus for Supervision	Recommended Supervisory Actions
Adam <i>Genesis 2:7 - 3:24</i>	• High achiever who seeks to look good • Hides own faults • Blames others • Defensive when criticized	• Believes she/he has nothing to learn in supervision • Fears rejection	Intern's need to acknowledge own limitations or weaknesses, and still be accepted by others	• Praise when intern deals with limitations or weaknesses • Resist praising intern's good work without also dealing with growth needs
Jacob <i>Genesis 27</i>	• Acknowledges own faults readily • Promises corrections but rarely changes • Accepts criticisms to remove focus on own weaknesses	Inadequate sense of self (seeks to be whomever others want intern to be)	Intern's need to discover a self separate from others, a self worthy of acceptance	• Praise when intern is honest, in touch with self • Distrust quick promises to change • Establish clear learning covenant
Moses <i>Exodus 3-4</i>	• Talks about being unable to change and grow • Frequently botches assignments • Afraid to take initiative	Inadequate confidence in own abilities (feels weak and helpless)	Intern's need to fulfill learning covenant, to demonstrate strength and competence	• Avoid rescuing intern • Praise accomplishments • Encourage self-initiative, responsibility
Geresene Demoniac <i>Mark 5:1-21</i>	• Appears out of control • Over-reacts to criticisms • Frequently requests special supervisory time but does not make good use of scheduled conferences	Inability to motivate self to focus on areas of needed growth	Intern's need to hear a firm, unambiguous word of acceptance from persons in authority, especially the supervisor	• Avoid focusing on crisis behavior • Set firm limits on acceptable behavior and use of supervisory time

DEFINITIONS OF SUPERVISION

A.

"Good supervision is the development of a support system for the enrichment of personhood and assistance in the performance of tasks. Good supervision addresses both personhood and tasks. To deal with personhood without tasks is therapy, and tasks without personhood is administration."

Doran McCarty, *Supervising Ministry Students* (1978), p. 9

B.

Supervision is "the process by which the supervisor helps the student find the meanings in the educational encounter that will contribute to his (or her) learning and competence in that and other situations."

Ruel Howe, *The Nature of Pastoral Supervision* (1984).

C.

Supervision is an extended conversation at regular intervals in which the student and a qualified supervisor commit themselves to reflect upon the concrete processes of ministry in which the student is engaged in an effort to focus available resources upon the student's personal development in a specific role of ministry.

David Steere, *An Experiment in Supervisory Training* (1969).

D.

Supervision is a function or form of ministry which is relevant to the Church as well as to the seminary. It is immediately transferable to working with laity. That is, supervision is a particular model of ministry which can enhance the formation and growth of Christian community, can empower the ministry of lay persons while serving to stabilize the system, and can, in the action-reflection mode, enable appropriate theologizing in ministries in today's world.

George I. Hunter, *Education for Supervised Ministries* (1980), pp. 3-4.

GUIDE TO SUPERVISION IN FIELD EDUCATION

Supervision is at the heart of the Field Education Program. Most simply, it is informed dialogue between pastors and students about the practice of ministry. Supervision is teaching and learning ministry.

In order for supervision to be effective and for teaching and learning about ministry to take place efficiently and purposefully, it needs to have shape. It must have clear goals and defined procedures. Otherwise, supervision becomes rambling chit-chat at one extreme, or authoritarian surveillance at the other. Supervision is neither.

Supervision is teaching. There are skills, attitudes, values and perspectives which are important to learn in becoming a minister. Although people come to ministry with personal qualities and aptitudes, and have a broad range of practical experiences which influence the way in which they minister, ministers are not born - they must learn. And who better to teach the practice of ministry in congregations than practicing parish ministers? Teaching does not occur by chance. It requires consciousness of and articulation of the dimensions of the practice of ministry. It requires attention to what the learner says, thinks, believes, feels and does. It requires critical reflection on experience. This means that supervision is much more than simply saying, "That was good," or "That was poor." It requires dialogue about what is going on, what should be going on, how to get from here to there, and why. Furthermore, teaching is a mutual endeavor. Teaching without learning is not teaching. The supervisor must therefore take the particular student completely into consideration when teaching.

Supervision is teaching ministers. The students who are involved in Field Education are ministering. They are not preparing to minister, but are already engaged in ministry while they grow more deeply into it. "What other perspectives might be helpful for understanding this problem? Let's try one or two of them on for size and see what happens."

Supervision works with ministers as people. Although supervision is centrally concerned with the exercise of ministry, ministers are obviously people with needs, goals, emotions, or self-images, anxieties and expectation of others. These are of crucial concern in supervision, even though supervision is not therapy. People, as they learn to minister, are changing as persons. New roles and tasks require adjustments in the personality. This can be anxiety producing or exhilarating. It is usually a combination of both. Whatever the case, attention to the person is critical.

Supervision is professional leadership in reforming ministerial practice. It is not just passing on the old ways of doing things. Rather, it involves re-thinking of one's own practice of ministry, a thorough analysis of what one believes, values and does. It involves experimentation and growth, dialogue with others, and the communication of new insights.

More specifically, supervision is leadership in the development of *ministerial self-understanding*. What do we understand ministry to be? What theological principles undergird and inform it? It is also leadership in the development of the *shape of ministry*. What are our tasks? What are our priorities? Where does ministry take place, and how does it happen well? Finally, it is leadership in the *quality of its exercise*. What skills must one have? How are they developed? The supervisor is one who leads in knowing what must be done, and one who can and does do it well. The supervisor has the necessary skills and can teach them to others.

Supervision, then, is teaching ministers to minister. In the process, developing ministers learn: (1) various skills involved in ministry; (2) to understand themselves as people; (3) to give shape to their ministry; and (4) to develop ministerial self-understanding which is based on sound and articulate theological grounds. Throughout the supervisory process, all four of these factors need to receive significant attention in conversations pastors and students have with one another.

-adapted from an article by Dr. Craig Dykstra

THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

The role of the Supervisor is primarily that of a *teacher* in an experience-based context for professional learning and growth. The supervisor enables the supervisee to become engaged in ministry through the setting in which he/she has a professional relationship and to reflect upon that experience in a disciplined systematic way in order that the supervisee might learn:

- to link theology with the practice of ministry,
- to relate religious traditions and values to the human and social needs which have been identified in the ministry setting,
- to select appropriate resources for understanding and responding to actual occasions/events of ministry, and
- to integrate feed-back, consultation, and supervision with the assessment of his/her ministry and the planning for new ministry.

The supervisor's role as teacher, in relation to the above learnings, is important whether the program of education-formation for ministry is part of the first professional degree, or of continuing education, or of theological education for laity.

The supervisor as teacher, is also a *manager* in relation to the field site with which he/she is associated. The management dimension of teaching in an experience-based program of preparation for ministry is crucial for the entry and involvement of the supervisee in that system; events/opportunities in ministry do not simply "happen" but require careful planning. The supervisor must have a first-hand knowledge of the organization's mission for which ministry is being exercised. He/she must also have authority to make decisions about assignments and must have a relationship with other staff members which makes the development of collegiality possible for the supervisee. Therefore, in order to provide the genuine focus for experience-based education-formation for ministry, the Supervisor needs to be able to operate with a legitimate degree of authority from within the system. There can be no such role as an "absentee-supervisor," although a person who is outside of the system might well provide services for advice, consultation, and reflection.



The supervisor, as teacher, is also a *model*. A supervisee might well adopt certain ways and qualities of the supervisor if they come naturally to him/her and have proven to be effective. The supervisor's modeling might also serve as a point of departure for the supervisee. Whatever the supervisee's response, modeling is an inescapable and important dimension of the supervisor's role as teacher.

It is important to note that the role of modeling in supervision is integral to one's function as a professional person. This does not mean that the supervisor is putting on a "show," nor does it mean that supervisees are obliged to either mimic or thoroughly reject the supervisor's style of ministry. It does mean that modeling is a natural free-will offering of any person engaged in supervision and that modeling can be enabling or disabling in learning and growth in ministry.

George I. Hunter
*Supervision and Education-Formation
for Ministry*, pp. 33-35

A Recommended Process for Creating the Learning Contract

- STEP 1. The intern and supervisor work independently in reviewing their respective congregational work-stories. (See Worksheets, pp. 16 and 18.)
- STEP 2. The intern and supervisor meet to share information from their work-stories and to explore areas of common interests and purposes.
- STEP 3. The intern prepares a "draft" of the learning contract based on the discussion in Step 2 above. (See Learning Contract, p. 21.)
- STEP 4. The intern and supervisor meet again to review the draft, make revisions as necessary, and arrive at a consensus.
- STEP 5. The intern puts the Learning Contract in final form and distributes copies to:
 - the Supervisor
 - the Supervised Ministry Committee
 - the Synagogue's Office of Supervised Ministry
 - the Intern

THE LEARNING COVENANT

A written "**Learning Covenant**" is used in the congregation-based internship to help focus the work, to bring clarity to the nature of this relationship, and to minimize misunderstandings. More specifically, it

- states the learning goals of the intern,
- designates strategies for achieving the learning goals, and
- identifies specific ways in which this work will be supervised.

The learning covenant should normally be completed within the first two weeks of an internship.

A Recommended Process for Creating the Learning Covenant

- STEP 1.** The intern and supervisor work independently to complete their respective covenant-building worksheets. (See Worksheets, pp. 16 and 19.)
- STEP 2.** The intern and supervisor meet to share information from their worksheets and to explore areas of common concerns and differences.
- STEP 3.** The intern prepares a "draft" of the learning covenant based upon the discussions in Step 2 above. (See "Learning Covenant, p. 21)
- STEP 4.** The intern and supervisor meet again to review the draft, make revisions as necessary, and arrive at a consensus.
- STEP 5.** The intern puts the Covenant in final form and distributes copies to:
- the Supervisor
 - the Supervised Ministry Committee
 - the Seminary's Office of Supervised Ministry
 - the Intern

BUILDING THE LEARNING COVENANT

A. What experience, knowledge or concerns do I bring to this internship in the following areas of pastoral responsibility?

Pastoral Function	My Strengths	Areas of Needed Growth
Pastoral Care		
Worship and Preaching		
Teaching and Education		
Evangelism and Social Ministry		
Leadership and Administration		

B. What do I need to understand about how congregations function?

C. How do I assess my current skills for relating to other people?

D. How do I assess my current skills for interpreting theologically my experiences in life and ministry?

E. What is my present understanding of my vocation?

F. How do I assess my present own level of spiritual discernment?

- G. **What other issues, in addition to the ones noted above, do I want to address in this internship?**

BUILDING THE LEARNING COVENANT

I. Self-Assessment

A. What particular areas of student change or vital living did the great teachers affect?

- H. **Given my knowledge of who I am and how I learn, the kind of supervision which I would find most helpful is...**

B. How would I describe my style of learning? How is my style of doing and how does this influence my present approach to learning in the classroom?

C. How would I describe my style of leadership? How is my style of influence the way I supervise the class?

D. What learning goals do I set for myself in this internship?

BUILDING THE LEARNING COVENANT

I. Self-Assessment

- A. What particular areas of ministry energize me and bring me the most satisfaction?

- B. How would I assess my experience in this congregation to date, and how does this influence my present approach to ministry in this context?

- C. How would I describe my style of leadership? How is this likely to influence the way I supervise the intern?

- D. What learning goals do I hope to accomplish for myself during this internship?

II. **Assessment of Congregation's Program/Ministry Needs.** What are the 4-5 areas of serviceⁱⁿ which we hope the intern will assume a leadership role?

III. **Personal Expectations.** What, if any, are your personal expectations of the intern with regard to the following?

- Office hours:
- Day off:
- Dress code:
- The way we will treat confidential information:
- When and where we will meet for weekly supervisory conferences:
- The intern's use of written reports for use in supervisory conferences:
- Other:

COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Decatur, Georgia 30031

LEARNING COVENANT

DUE: By end of second week of internship

INSTRUCTIONS: *The purposes of this Learning Covenant are (a) to clarify what the intern seeks to learn in this internship, (b) to establish a plan for the intern's ministry and how it will be supervised, and (c) to clarify expectations of the student and supervisor. Following a discussion of what each party brings to the relationship (see "Worksheets for Building A Learning Covenant"), the intern and supervisor arrive at consensus about the terms of the covenant.*

Intern: _____

Supervisor: _____

Congregation: _____

Dates of Internship: _____ to _____

Beginning Date

Ending Date

Name of Congregation _____

City/State _____

Part I. Goal Development

Learning Goals

List a maximum of five learning goals, achievable in this context, which can be applied in future ministry situations.

Example: *to identify my strengths and weaknesses for visiting with people in a variety of pastoral situations.*

Pastoral Activities

For each learning goal, state specific activities or strategies which will enable the intern to achieve that goal.

Examples:

- a) visit in hospital weekly
- b) visit shut-ins each Thursday

Plan for Supervision

For each learning goal, indicate ways the intern plans to present experiences or issues to the supervisor and/or committee.

Example: *I will present at least three verbatims or case studies out of my visits, and prepare a list of strengths/weaknesses.*

Continue on next page...

Learning Goals

continued from page one

Pastoral Activities

continued from page one

Plan for Supervision

continued from page one

continued...

Part II. Structure for Learning

Office Hours:

Days Off:

Dress Code:

Time and Place of Supervisor Conferences

Specific Responsibilities of Intern not noted in Learning Goals:

Dates for Evaluation:

- Evaluation of Internship Structures and Relationships *(due by end of fourth week)*;
- Evaluation of Intern's Ministry *(to be completed during final week of internship)*;

This Learning Covenant is accepted by:

Supervisor's Signature	Date
Intern's Signature	Date

Copies of this Learning Covenant should be given to each of the following:

- Intern
- Supervisor
- Chair of Congregation's Supervised Ministry Committee
- Office of Supervised Ministry, Columbia Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 520, Decatur, GA 30031

THE SUPERVISORY CONFERENCE

Purpose

The Supervisory Conference is a regularly scheduled, intentional time when the intern and supervisor come together to reflect critically upon the pastoral experiences of the student and the life of the congregation. It is an indispensable element of the internship which distinguishes *supervised* ministry from other life experiences of the student.

What the Supervisory Conference is not

- It is **not** primarily an **administrative meeting** for planning church activities and coordinating calendars ... although this may be an appropriate way to begin or conclude.
- It is **not** primarily a **therapy session** ... although the emotional dimensions of the intern's pastoral experiences are often appropriate aspects of the educational process.
- It is **not** primarily a **monologue** in which the intern listens passively while the supervisor tells about all of his or her former experiences ... although the conference dialogue may appropriately include occasional references to such experiences.

Guidelines for the Supervisory Conference

Schedule. A one-hour (minimum) Supervisory Conference should be held for each 40-50 hours of the intern's service, i.e., once per week in a full-time internship. Conferences should be held at a regularly scheduled time and place without constant interruptions.

Focus. The conferences are educational in nature, with the focus normally being on a specific act of ministry presented by the intern for theological reflection and critique. (See *Methods of Reporting*, p. 28.)

Feedback. The principles of good feedback should be used in the supervisory conferences. (See *Feedback*, p. 27)

A Suggested Process for the Supervisory Conference

Prior to the Conference

- The intern prepares a written report of a pastoral event^{or series of events} and submits this in advance to the supervisor.
- The supervisor and the intern independently examine this report and any notes made following the previous conference.

A Typical Conference

- Step 1. **Centering.** Entry time for "shifting gears" from other concerns so that both persons can focus on the agenda at hand.
- Step 2. **Clarifying.** The content of the intern's report is reviewed and the supervisor raises questions to clarify the content of the report.
- Step 3. **Setting Priorities.** The intern identifies what he or she hopes to learn from this event, indicating why this particular event was selected for discussion. The article, *Basic Levels of Supervisory Concern*, (p. 31) may be of particular value for this.
- Step 4. **Analysis.** The intern's report is analyzed in terms of why things happened as they did, and "what insights, feelings and theological issues have been generated by this experience of ministry."
- Step 5. **Identifying Learnings and Projecting.** The conference is concluded by identifying what learnings have emerged from these reflections, and by projecting about how this experience might inform future events in ministry.

(Design adapted from George Hunter, *Supervision and Education Formation for Ministry*, p. 28.)

Following the Conference the supervisor and intern should both record in their supervisory journals their own impressions of:

- how the intern functioned in this pastoral event, noting areas of needed growth and making recommendations for future learning and action.
- the feelings of the intern and supervisor which emerged in this conference, noting concerns about emotional growth and interpersonal relationships.
- any agenda which needs to be pursued in subsequent supervisory conferences.

FEEDBACK

Feedback is specific commentary on what one observes about the intern and the way she or he does ministry. It involves describing to the intern how his or her behavior is seen and how it effects others. The ultimate purpose of feedback is to help the intern become more effective in ministry.

- (1) Feedback is *not* useful if it is used to punish the intern, "to get something off our chest," or to show superiority over the intern.
- (2) Both *positive* and *negative* feedback are important. The intern can grow by hearing about positive contributions as well as his or her mistakes.
- (3) Characteristics of good feedback:
 - (a) **It is descriptive** rather than judgmental. Avoiding judgmental language reduces the defensiveness of the intern.
 - (b) **It is specific** rather than general. To describe the intern as "bossy" or "domineering" is not as useful to say, "This morning when you were leading the class discussion, you appeared to be disturbed by the direction of the discussion."
 - (c) **It is timely.** In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after a given event of ministry. The intern who is described as "lacking initiative" has less opportunity to learn from feedback than the intern who is told, "Yesterday when we were meeting with the Committee you seemed very reluctant to contribute your own ideas or concerns."
 - (d) **It is checked to insure clear communication.** One good way to check for clarity is to ask the intern to rephrase the feedback to see if he or she has heard what was actually said.
 - (e) **It is directed primarily at the intern's behavior.** Feedback about personality can be ego-destructive and needs to be done with more sensitivity.

---Adapted from Nicholas VanDyck, "Supervision in Theological Field Education: Shaping a Person-Oriented Working Relationship," Theological Education, Vol. XII, No. 4, pp. 236-244.

METHODS OF REPORTING

There are many useful methods of reporting events of ministry for review by the intern and the supervisor. Listed below are several methods that have been found to be especially helpful in the congregation-based internship.

- **Manuscripts.** The intern prepares copies of a sermon manuscript, a speech outline, or a lesson plan. Prior to the evaluation, the intern submits a copy of the written material to the supervisor so that he or she can be prepared in advance to discuss the event. In this method the evaluation focuses on content or organization.
- **Tape Recordings.** Teaching events, sermons, and group meetings can be reviewed through the use of audio or video tape recordings. This method allows for consideration of both content and form or process. It tends to arouse more defensiveness or anxiety in students than many other forms, but it can be very helpful in understanding ministry experiences.
- **Observation Reports.** The intern reports as fully and concretely as possible, an event in which he or she was an observer, not an active participant or designated leader, e.g., a business meeting, a wedding or funeral, a youth retreat. This method permits a low-risk style of reporting which is centered on events led by others.
- **Verbatim Account.** In this method the intern writes as nearly as possible a word-for-word account of a pastoral conversation in which he or she engaged. The conversation is prefaced with a brief description of the circumstances and background of the person(s) involved; and it is followed by a brief evaluative summary. This method focuses on the subtleties of communication, and is a proven process for evaluating pastoral skills and interpersonal relationships. (See *Guideline: Verbatim Report*, p. 29, and *Examining Case Studies and Verbatims*, p. 32.)
- **Case Study.** The intern writes a one-page description of a critical event in ministry in which he or she was involved. Most frequently this involves an incident which raises an ethical or theological dilemma. This is a particularly good method for meetings with the Supervised Ministry Committee. (See *Sample Case Study*, p. 30, and *Examining Case Studies and Verbatims*, p. 32.)

GUIDELINES

Verbatim Report of a Pastoral Conversation

1. Known information about the person.

Who is this person and what critical information did you know about him/her before this encounter? (e.g., age? sex? race? marital status? sibling rank? parents? children? religious beliefs? vocation? education? economic status? social concerns? political allegiance?)

2. Observed information about the person.

What did you see, sense, feel about this person during the encounter? Examples:

- physical appearance.
- the setting: in which the conversation occurred?
- time of day?
- other person(s) around or involved?
- your initial impression: did you like or dislike this person? Did your feelings change?
- your affectual response: Was this person interesting, boring, attractive, repulsive, enjoyable, etc.? Did this person make you anxious? Did you find yourself engaged, turned-off, withdrawing, etc.?
- initiation and termination: who initiated this contact? How? Why? Who terminated it?
- How long did the encounter take?

3. Verbatim account of the pastoral conversation.

Recall not only what was said but use parenthesis to indicate what you observed of non-verbal communication in the person and/or what you felt during the encounter. Example:

M 1: Hello, I am John Doe, the intern pastor at First Church. *(Felt anxious, first call of the day, standing before a man who had been stabbed by his wife.)*

P 1: Ugh. *(Did not really acknowledge me. Seemed drugged.)*

M 2: Are you uncomfortable? *(What else can I say? Am really anxious. Is he rejecting me?)*

P 2: Yeah. *(Eureka? He's in touch with himself and he acknowledged me. Now what?)*

4. Reflective assessment of the conversation.

- What did you hear: about this person's life-style, present needs, etc.?
- How do you now feel about this contact?
- What was the significance of the communication?
- If you could repeat this contact, what would you do differently?

5. Assessment of Ministry.

- What personal issues did this event raise for you?
- What about this conversation do you consider to be ministry?

-- adapted from materials prepared by Jasper N. Keith

“The Pounding”

Background. My learning covenant with the congregation calls for me to be a “resource person” for the youth groups, assisting the youth advisers (a veteran couple with the senior highs and a young woman for the junior highs) to plan youth programs. Two weeks into the internship the senior high advisers resigned, so the two groups were combined. Sally, the remaining adviser, became adviser for the merged group.

A week later, Sally, my wife, and I took the youth to the beach for their annual summer retreat. While there we encountered some behavior problems with several of the older kids. My wife and I felt that disciplinary action was warranted, but Sally insisted that we “let it slide.” This was the first of many occasions when our styles would clash. I wanted to include educational experiences in the Sunday evening programs, but Sally insisted that the meetings were just for fun. The young people sensed our differences, and they agreed with Sally. Because I didn’t want to be “the heavy,” I chose not to force my views upon the group.

Description. Several weeks later at a mission program for the youth -- which I had worked real hard to put together -- the youth responded with a total lack of attention and were rude to our guest speaker. I lost my cool with the kids! The next day I called for an emergency meeting of the Parents’ Advisory Committee so that I could vent my frustrations. Much to my surprise, the meeting turned out to be a “pound the intern” meeting where the parents vented their frustration with me! They expressed support for Sally’s leadership and almost none for mine. I was crushed!

Analysis. There are three issues in this for me. *First*, I felt all alone. I had told my supervisor about the discipline problems, and on one occasion he had even confronted the guilty young person and his parents. The supervisor knew that I was having conflicts with Sally, and he had agreed with me that she was immature. However, because she was the daughter of one of our most influential elders, he was reluctant to make any intervention. *Second*, I let my frustrations and anger build up, with the result that I blasted the youth group, not Sally or the Christian Education Committee. And *third*, there were major differences of opinion about the purpose of the youth group and my role in it.

Evaluation. I continue to believe that my strategy for building an educational program for the youth was correct, but I was not effective in convincing others. How should I deal with the frustrations brought about by such conflicts?

BASIC LEVELS OF SUPERVISORY CONCERN

Regardless of the method selected for reporting ministry experiences, there are at least five basic areas of concern appropriate for attention in a supervisory conference:

1. **Professional Level** -- the more technical, skill-oriented level used to evaluate the intern's abilities in preaching, teaching, pastoral care, etc. The supervisor or committee might ask questions such as:
 - *In what ways was the intern effective in this particular act of ministry?*
 - *What skills were used with competence?*
 - *What skills were lacking?*
2. **Interpersonal Level** -- the realm of human relationships.
 - *How did the intern relate to other persons in this event?*
 - *How did the intern deal with his or her own emotions in this event?*
 - *How does the intern deal with conflict situations?*
3. **Systemic Level** -- the way the intern demonstrates competence in working with organizations and social structures in the church and community.
 - *In what ways did the intern exercise good leadership with the committee?*
 - *How did the intern demonstrate sensitivity to the expectations or traditions of the congregation?*
 - *How did the intern deal with the power struggle going on in this committee?*
4. **Theological Level** -- the way in which the intern integrates his or her theological understandings and convictions with the issues of ministry.
 - *What theological questions emerge from this event? What doctrines are helpful for understanding this situation?*
 - *Where does the intern see the activity of God in this event?*
 - *What biblical events seem parallel to the event being reported by the intern? at ways are the two similar?*
5. **Vocational Level** -- the intern's emerging sense of vocational identity and spiritual formation.
 - *What did the intern learn from this experience about a call to ministry?*
 - *What concept of ministry is suggested by the way the intern functioned?*
 - *How comfortable was the intern in exercising pastoral authority?*
 - *How has this experience helped the intern understand his or her spiritual life?*

It is not necessary for all five levels to be discussed in every supervisory conference. Some reports will point to only one or two levels where growth is of critical importance; other reports will beg for dialogue at all five levels. Nevertheless, being aware of these various levels can be very constructive in building the agenda for the conference.

EXAMINING CASE STUDIES AND VERBATIMS

When the intern presents a case study or verbatim, the following may be a helpful process to guide the reflections. It is recommended that these five stages be followed in this order. It is not necessary to explore each question listed under each stage; these are offered to illustrate the concerns of each stage.

1. **Informative Stage** -- getting an accurate picture of the event or situation:
 - *What took place? What was the situation?*
 - *What was your role? How did you respond?*
2. **Evaluation Stage** -- identifying the problem and/or what needs specific attention:
 - *What emotions did you experience?*
 - *What are your feelings about this incident now?*
 - *How do you feel about the other people involved?*
 - *What are the key issues for you?*
3. **Theologizing Stage** -- the meaning of this experience in light of Christian tradition (scripture, theology, church history): *← experience links back to*
 - *What new insights do you have about self? human nature? church? the world? God?*
 - *At what points does your experience intersect with the biblical story? In what ways?*
 - *What does this have to say to you about ministry?*
4. **Resolution Stage** -- exploring alternative ways of viewing the situation, and choosing one which seems most appropriate for this situation:
 - *What were realistic options that were available for you in this case?*
 - *What did you want to have happen in this situation?*
 - *How can the continuing situation best be confronted or handled?*
5. **Commitment Stage** -- decision in terms of choosing a response for future ministry:
 - *What have you learned from this situation about ministry? about yourself?*
 - *What changes, if any, are in order?*
 - *What new skills or resources do you need to develop?*

--adapted from Kenneth Pohly, *A Supervisory Conversation*

COMMON PROBLEMS FOR SUPERVISORS

1. Being **negative**, focusing only on telling the intern what he or she is doing wrong, ignoring what is being done effectively.
2. Using **confrontation** only when a crisis has developed, not as a constructive way of teaching and caring.
3. **Avoiding supervision**; limiting supervision only to assigning tasks, coordinating programs, and working without engaging in reflection.
4. Playing role of **psychotherapist**. (Supervision *does* consider aspects of the intern's behavior, but it is not appropriate to blend supervision and therapy, even when the supervisor is a trained therapist.)
5. Focusing only on **skill development**, ignoring the more comprehensive nature of the intern's preparation for ministry.
6. Failing to keep **confidences**.
7. Occupying the intern only with **busy work** or making **unreasonable** demands of the intern.
8. Using **authority** inappropriately either (a) failing to exercise authority and being a "pushover" who is afraid of hurting the intern's feelings, or (b) acting in a highly authoritarian mode which generally leads to the intern's resentment and the deterioration of the supervisor-intern relationship.
9. Focusing only on theological language and ignoring the intern's **internalized theology**.

---adapted from Doran McCarty,
Supervising Ministry Students

EVALUATION IN SUPERVISED MINISTRY

What are the purposes of evaluation?

- to teach the intern to make effective use of *self-appraisal* throughout a lifetime of ministry.
- to help the intern discern the wisdom of his or her *vocational choice* to enter ordained ministry. (In some cases it may serve as a confirmation of one's call to ministry; in others, it may guide the person to other forms of Christian service.)
- to provide a means by which the intern is *accountable* for his or her service in the congregation, certifying that the intern has met educational standards of the seminary and denomination.

What is being evaluated?

- the intern's progress toward mutually *established goals* in the learning covenant.
- the intern's *effectiveness* in specific aspects of ministry.
- the intern's *strengths and needs* for further development. This should be comprehensive, including concern for
 - professional formation
 - spiritual formation
 - vocational clarity
 - skills for interpersonal relations, social analysis, and theological discernment.
- the intern's *ability to integrate* experience with theory, private convictions with public actions, and individual discipleship with life in Christian community.

What kind of process is used in evaluating the intern?

- It should be both *descriptive* and *prescriptive*.
- It should be part of an *ongoing process*, not a final judgment, and should encourage continued, life-long self-assessment. Optimally, the final evaluation report will contain no surprises to the intern.

- It should reflect a mutually trustworthy relationship and interpersonal sensitivity between supervisor and intern. It should be *dialogical* in nature.
- It should be *candid* and *honest*, not given only to superlatives.
- It should demonstrate *sensitivity* to racial/ethnic and gender differences between the supervisor and intern.
- It should be preceded by an open discussion of the *images* of the "ideal pastor" which are brought to the assessment process by both the supervisor and the intern.

Who prepares the evaluation reports?

The supervising pastor is responsible for guiding the process, considering input from the intern and Supervised Ministry Committee, preparing the report, and submitting the evaluation report to the seminary.

For whom are the evaluation reports prepared?

The evaluation report is prepared primarily for the intern to foster his or her growth and development in ministry.

Secondarily, the report is prepared for the seminary and the denominational candidacy process.

Schedule for the Evaluation Process

- **At the end of four weeks** - the supervisor and intern complete the *Evaluation of Internship Structure and Relationships* on p. 36 ff.
- **By December 15** (full-time, year-long interns only) - the supervisor submits to the Seminary a mid-year evaluation of the intern's work (reviewed and signed by intern prior to being submitted). See *Evaluation of Supervised Ministry* form on pp. 38 ff.
- **During the last week of the internship** - the supervisor submits to the Seminary a final evaluation of the intern's work. Input from the Supervised Ministry Committee is encouraged. The evaluation is reviewed and signed by the intern prior to being submitted. Please use the *Evaluation of Supervised Ministry* form, pp. 38 ff.

4. The Intern has a clear sense of his or her **responsibilities** for ministry.
responsibilities 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ responsibilities
not clear are clear
5. **Supervisory Conferences...**
(a) are held at a **regular time** each week
never 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ always
- (b) are conducted **without frequent interruptions**
never 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ always
- (c) have been **mutually beneficial**
not 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ very
beneficial beneficial
- (d) have made use of **written reports** submitted by
the intern in advance (check one response):
never ___ occasionally ___ always ___
6. **The Supervised Ministry Committee...**
(a) is adequately **staffed**
yes ___ no ___
- (b) has a clear sense of its **purpose**
not 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ very
clear clear
- (c) has established a **schedule** for future meetings
yes ___ no ___
7. **Communication** between the intern and supervisor is
open and honest.
seldom 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ always
8. Other concerns or issues which need attention:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Columbia Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 520
Decatur, Georgia 300031

EVALUATION OF SUPERVISED MINISTRY

(Congregation-Based Internship)

Student: _____

Congregation: _____

City/State: _____

Supervising Pastor: _____

Term of Ministry: _____ to _____
Beginning Date Ending Date

I. MINISTRY ABILITIES

Instructions: For each item below, decide which of the following performance levels best describes the student's abilities. Circle the appropriate number at left of the item.

N	1	2	3	4
No Basis for Judgment	Not Effective			Exceptionally Effective

A. Role as Pastoral Care-Giver

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| N 1 2 3 4 | Listening to people without personal agenda intruding |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Accepting people who are different from him/herself |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Understanding and discerning needs of people |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Respecting confidential information in appropriate ways |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Relating to others in friendly, positive manner |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Being at ease in one-to-one relationships |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Being at ease in group relationships |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Responding with empathy and resourcefulness to people in times of need |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Showing appropriate initiative in responding to pastoral needs of persons |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Visiting with persons in non-crisis situations |

B. *Role as Worship Leader/Preacher*

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| N 1 2 3 4 | Planning well-coordinated worship |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Leading public prayer |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Using appropriate language in worship & preaching (e.g., grammar, inclusive language, level of abstractions, slang) |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Using voice in worship (volume, clarity, inflection) |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Using body gestures appropriately |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Interpreting biblical text faithfully in sermons |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Organizing sermons with clarity |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Using illustrations in sermons |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Making sermons relevant to the needs of people |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Demonstrating poise and personal comfort in the role of worship leader/preacher |

C. *Role as Teacher*

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| N 1 2 3 4 | Involving learners in the educational process |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Setting clear goals and objectives |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Selecting concepts appropriate for learners' age and needs |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Sequencing teaching activities in logical order |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Communicating Christian beliefs with clarity |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Using appropriate variety of teaching methods |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Using well-stated questions to stimulate learning |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Leading group discussions in a purposeful way |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Creating an appropriate physical environment for learning |

D. *Role in the World*

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| N 1 2 3 4 | Identifying and analyzing social or community issues |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Relating biblical/theological insights to issues |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Developing strategies for social change |
| N 1 2 3 4 | Enabling members to become aware of and participate in the ministry of the congregation to the community & world |

- N 1 2 3 4 **Integrating** concern for personal faith/ethics with concern for social justice
- N 1 2 3 4 **Identifying with & caring for** needy persons in the community
- N 1 2 3 4 Relating the Christian **faith** to persons outside the church
- N 1 2 3 4 Utilizing the **resources** of the church to deal with social issues or community problems

E. *Role as Leader and Administrator*

- N 1 2 3 4 **Supporting** total ministry of congregation with enthusiasm and a cooperative spirit
- N 1 2 3 4 **Communicating** in open, honest, straightforward manner
- N 1 2 3 4 **Analyzing** congregation's **decision-making** processes
- N 1 2 3 4 Exercising **authority** in appropriate ways
- N 1 2 3 4 Accepting and learning from constructive **criticism**
- N 1 2 3 4 Dealing constructively with **conflict**
- N 1 2 3 4 Empowering **lay leadership**
- N 1 2 3 4 Making **positive contributions** with working groups
- N 1 2 3 4 Planning and developing programs
- N 1 2 3 4 **Implementing** programs
- N 1 2 3 4 **Evaluating** programs
- N 1 2 3 4 Demonstrating constructive attitude about **denomination.**

F. *Personal Work Habits*

- N 1 2 3 4 Developing disciplines for **spiritual growth**
- N 1 2 3 4 **Managing time** for study, work, family/friends, and self
- N 1 2 3 4 Being **punctual** and keeping appointments
- N 1 2 3 4 Being **dependable**
- N 1 2 3 4 Being **prepared**
- N 1 2 3 4 Setting realistic **work objectives**
- N 1 2 3 4 **Completing** tasks
- N 1 2 3 4 **Dressing** appropriately
- N 1 2 3 4 Observing **etiquette** appropriate to the setting

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

- A. How would you describe the student's general **temperament/disposition** as he/she has been experienced in your congregation (e.g., angry, nervous, confident, casual, careless, serious, joyful, warm, etc.)?

- B. How would you describe his/her level of **psychological and spiritual maturity**?

- C. Please assess the student's **leadership style** by underlining the words below which most effectively describe him/her.

thoughtful	directing	reserved	adapting
modest	quick to act	economical	flexible
trusting	self confident	practical	socially skillful
cooperative	seeks change	factual	tactful
idealistic	persuasive	tenacious	enthusiastic
helpful	forceful	steadfast	dealing
receptive	competitive	thorough	inspiring
responsive	risking	methodical	animated
loyal	persistent	detailed	negotiating
urgent	analytical	fun	appropriate

IV. Conclusion

- ☐ Please check if input from the lay Committee on Supervised Ministry was used in completing this report.
- ☐ Please check if the Supervising Pastor understands that this report may be used for evaluative purposes by the Seminary *and* the student's denominational candidacy process.
- ☐ Please check if the Supervising Pastor has reviewed this evaluation with the student.

Please check one of the following to summarize the Supervisor's recommendation to the Seminary:

- ☐ That the student receive **credit** for this internship.
- ☐ That the student receive **no credit** for this internship

Supervisor's Signature

Date

V. Student's Response

Instructions: *After the supervisor and student have reviewed this evaluation together, the student should check **one** of the following:*

- ☐ I have read the above report and agree that it is a fair evaluation of me and my ministry in this internship.
- ☐ I have read the above report and agree with this evaluation with the following exceptions or additions (*Additional pages may be attached*):

Student's Signature

Date

Evaluation of Worship Leadership

Intern: _____ Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Congregation: _____

Evaluation Prepared by: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide honest, constructive feedback on the intern's leadership in worship. For those items which use a 1 to 5 scale, simply **circle the number** that seems most appropriate. You are free to write any comments that help explain your response.
When completed, **please return to the intern.**

1. What was your **general impression** of the intern's worship leadership today?

Appeared uncertain 1 2 3 4 5 *Appeared confident*

Appeared unprepared 1 2 3 4 5 *Appeared to be well prepared*

Poor use of grammar 1 2 3 4 5 *Used correct grammar*

2. The intern's **prayers** were:

Not relevant 1 2 3 4 5 *Relevant*

Insincere 1 2 3 4 5 *Sincere*

Shallow Stale 1 2 3 4 5 *Insightful Fresh*

3. What did you understand to be the **main thought** of the sermon?

4. The sermon helped me understand the meaning of the **biblical text**.
- Poorly done* 1 2 3 4 5 *Well done*
5. The **organization** of the sermon was:
- Not clear* 1 2 3 4 5 *Very clear*
6. The sermon made good use of literary, historical or personal **illustrations**.
- Poorly done* 1 2 3 4 5 *Well done*
7. The sermon was relevant to our **congregation and community**.
- Irrelevant* 1 2 3 4 5 *Relevant*
8. The sermon was **personally applicable** to my situation.
- Not applicable* 1 2 3 4 5 *Very applicable*
9. How did this sermon make you **feel**?
10. What did the sermon **challenge** you to do?
11. The intern used appropriate **physical gestures** in preaching.
- None used* 1 2 3 4 5 *Used appropriately*
12. The intern's **vocal inflection** was...
- Poor* 1 2 3 4 5 *Excellent*

THE CONGREGATION'S COMMITTEE ON SUPERVISED MINISTRY

Teaching congregations are expected to appoint a small team of lay persons to serve on the Committee on Supervised Ministry. The Committee has three important purposes in the internship:

- to provide support to the intern;
- to give feedback and evaluation to the intern; and
- to explore the meaning of their vocation as a congregation.

A *Manual for the Committee on Supervised Ministry* is available from the Seminary's Office of Supervised Ministry which offers detailed information about the composition and agenda of the Committee.

Role of the Supervising Pastor

While the Supervisor is encouraged to be an active participant in the work of the Committee, it is not helpful when the Pastor assumes the role of "expert" and dominates the group discussions. To the contrary, the most effective supervisors encourage the contributions of the laity in the internship, and serve as a theological and process consultant for the work of the Committee.

Beyond this, the most important role of the Supervising Pastor is to communicate to the Committee a sense of support and enthusiasm for their work.

Preparing the Committee

One of the most important tasks of the Supervising Pastor with the Committee comes prior to the actual beginning of the internship. More detailed information is included in the Committee's *Manual*, but the following are key steps in preparing this group for its work:

- (1) Identify and enlist the members of the Committee. Give special attention to the selection of the Moderator. The Committee should be approved by the Session or other governing body of the congregation.
- (2) Give a copy of the *Manual* to each member of the Committee and encourage them to read this material prior to the first meeting.

- (3) Meet with the Committee Moderator prior to the first meeting to review the *Manual* and to plan the work of the Committee. Clarify your role as resource person, and encourage the Moderator to assume his or her role as the group's leader.
- (4) At the first meeting of the Committee, communicate your support of their work, and help set a tone of mutual trust and openness.

Problems with the Committee

Ineffectiveness of the Committee on Supervised Ministry is most often linked to one or more of the following:

- the committee meets too infrequently, so that trust and continuity never develop;
- the committee moderator has poor skills for leading the group or doesn't have a clear understanding of the task;
- the committee focuses too narrowly on giving feedback on sermons or other single tasks;
- the committee senses that the Supervising Pastor sees little value in their work;
- the intern and the committee moderator do not communicate prior to each meeting to prepare the agenda.

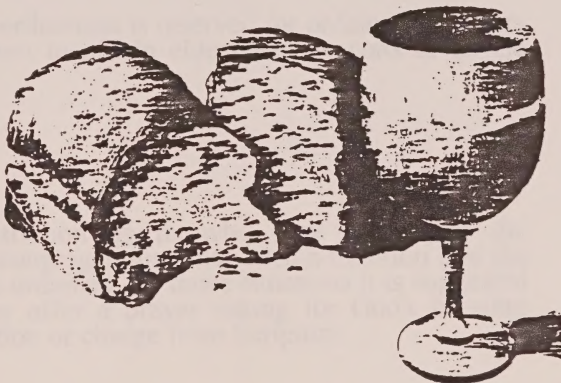
GUIDELINES FOR UNORDAINED LEADERS

Presbyterian Church (USA)

These guidelines are offered as an interpretation of *The Book of Order* and the traditions of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and other Reformed denominations. Some of these are recommendations based on long and meaningful traditions, not on specific constitutional restrictions of denomination. Where the *Book of Order* is silent, local customs of the congregation may take precedence over these guidelines.

LORD'S SUPPER

The *Book of Order* calls for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to be administered by a Minister of Word and Sacrament (W-2.4012). While the constitution does not specify exactly what parts of the sacramental liturgy must be led by ordained clergy, at least these two actions are commonly considered to be restricted: (1) offering the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving before the elements; and (2) breaking the bread and offering the cup with accompanying words of institution. The unordained may preach and assist in other parts of the service.



BAPTISM

Ordinarily only the ordained baptize (W-2.3011), which is commonly understood to refer at least to (1) putting water on the head and (2) using the Trinitarian formula. As with the Lord's Supper, the ordained offer the prayer preceding the baptism in which thanksgiving is offered and the work of the Holy Spirit is invoked.

WEDDINGS

According to both civil law and the *Book of Order*, only the ordained may "perform the wedding" and sign the papers. Liturgically this is commonly interpreted to mean that only an ordained minister may conduct that part of the service which includes the wedding vows, the declaration of the marriage, and the blessing of the couple and congregation.

The unordained may appropriately lead in the call to worship, statements about the meaning of marriage, reading of Scripture, the sermon, the prayers, or other parts of the service.

FUNERAL

Unordained persons may lead the entire funeral service, including the committal.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

This symbolic act in a service of ordination is reserved for ordained ministers and elders gathered as the Session to ordain elders and deacons or as the presbytery to ordain ministers.

BENEDICTION

There is no constitutional restriction as to who may pronounce the benediction. However, in many congregations it has been a tradition that the benediction is offered only by the ordained. In those situations it is suggested that the unordained liturgist may offer a prayer asking for God's blessing upon the people, or use an ascription or charge from Scripture.

MODERATING A SESSION MEETING

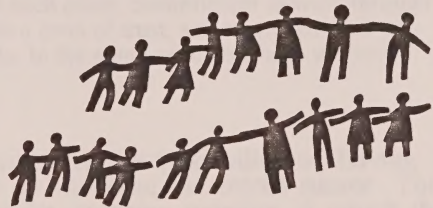
The Book of Order (G-14.0307) states that "under no circumstances may an inquirer or candidate serve as moderator of a session..."

SERVICES FOR BEGINNING AND ENDING AN INTERNSHIP

The following suggestions are for use (modified to suit the local situation) as an appropriate beginning and conclusion for a relationship between an intern pastor, supervising pastor, and teaching congregation. The services are designed for the congregation's public worship and would most appropriately be used on the first and last Sunday of the Supervised Ministry experience. These suggestions are offered out of a conviction that a clear and public beginning and ending can effect the quality of the whole experience of ministry for both seminarian and congregation.

A Service of Beginning

It is appropriate for the intern pastor (and his or her family, if applicable) to be introduced to the congregation during a time when the common concerns of the people are normally shared. Careful consideration should be given to the words chosen when introducing the intern pastor to the congregation, for this introduction will be a significant factor in the way many members of the congregation will perceive the role of the seminarian. It is suggested that he or she be introduced as an "Intern Pastor" rather than a "summer worker," "youth director," or "children's minister," for this can have a very limiting impact on the work that he or she is to do. It would also be appropriate at this time to describe briefly the nature of supervised ministry, explaining that the intern pastor will be serving with the congregation, learning about how he or she functions as a minister, seeking to deepen an understanding of the church, and developing specific skills for ministry.



A Litany of Beginning (or Litany of Welcome)

- Liturgist: We gather to worship the Living God.
- People: We have come from different places with different concerns, but we come to worship God as a community of faith.
- Liturgist: God has done wondrous things as the Kingdom of God has touched our community and called us to service.

People: God has blessed us as individuals and as a community.

Liturgist: God continues to bless us in many and specific ways. And on this day we celebrate a new blessing with _____ (*name of Intern Pastor*) in our midst.

Intern Pastor: I (we) come to serve and learn amidst your faith community.

People: Our homes...our hospitals and nursing homes...our classrooms and programs...our sanctuary...our lives are open to you, _____ (*name of Intern Pastor*), as a servant of Jesus Christ. We welcome you to this community.

Intern Pastor: I seek to earn your trust which is sacred. In service to God, I seek your response to me as one preparing for a life of service as a minister of Jesus Christ.

Liturgist: Let us pray: Oh, God, for your rich blessings that come to your people, for service in your name, for the grace of growing relationships and the sacredness of teaching and learning your purposes, we give thanks. We pray your blessings upon this congregation and ask you to guide and nurture this new ministry that we begin today. As _____ (*Intern Pastor*) has come to serve us, we seek also to serve him/her. May our experiences together enrich _____ (*Intern Pastor*) and us. In our giving and receiving we ask for courage to risk honesty; patience to understand each other; commitment to work through our differences; faith to lift us to a level of trust; and awareness that you care who we are and what we do. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

People: Amen.

The congregation may also want to consider the possibility of having a congregational meal together as a way to welcome the intern pastor. This time of fellowship could follow the Sunday morning worship at which the intern pastor is welcomed, or it could be planned for an evening during the first week.

A Service of Ending

The conclusion of the internship is also important, and it is appropriate that some closure be brought to the period of supervised ministry through an act of corporate worship. The following litany or one similar to it could be used on the seminarian's last Sunday with the congregation.

A Litany of Thanksgiving for a Shared Ministry

Liturgist: There are different gifts, but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

People: There are different ways of serving God, but it is the same Lord who is served.

- Liturgist: God works through different people in different ways.
- People: But it is the same God whose purposes are achieved through the people of God.
- Liturgist: Each person is given gifts by the Spirit,
- People: to use it for the common good.
- Liturgist: Together we are the body of Christ,
- People: and individually members of Christ,
- Liturgist: Though we have different gifts, together we are a ministry of reconciliation led by the risen Christ. We work and pray to make God's church a useful servant in the world; and we call persons to faith, so that, in the end, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Let us join together in prayer.
- People: We thank you for your servant, _____ (*Intern Pastor*), whom you called to serve among us.
- Intern Pastor: I thank you, O Lord, for these, your people, who have taught me and welcomed me into their lives in our ministry together.
- People: We thank you for _____'s (*Intern Pastor*) special gifts for ministry, and pray that you will guide him/her as he/she continues to prepare for service in your church.
- Intern Pastor: I thank you, O God, for the gifts of faith and the special work of ministry that each of these, your people will continue to carry out in this place.
- People: We thank you, Lord, for the way that _____ (*Intern Pastor*) has preached, and taught, and served as a pastor with us.
- Intern Pastor: I thank you, Lord, for what I have learned about your church and the richness of a life shared in common ministry.
- Liturgist: For these, and for many other memories and challenges which we all share, accept our thanks, O God.
- All: Though we now go separate ways in working for your Kingdom, help us to know that we are joined forever in your loving care. Never let friendship fade, but keep us remembering one another, and grateful for the life we have shared, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(portions of this Litany adapted from *The Worshipbook*)

TAX INFORMATION

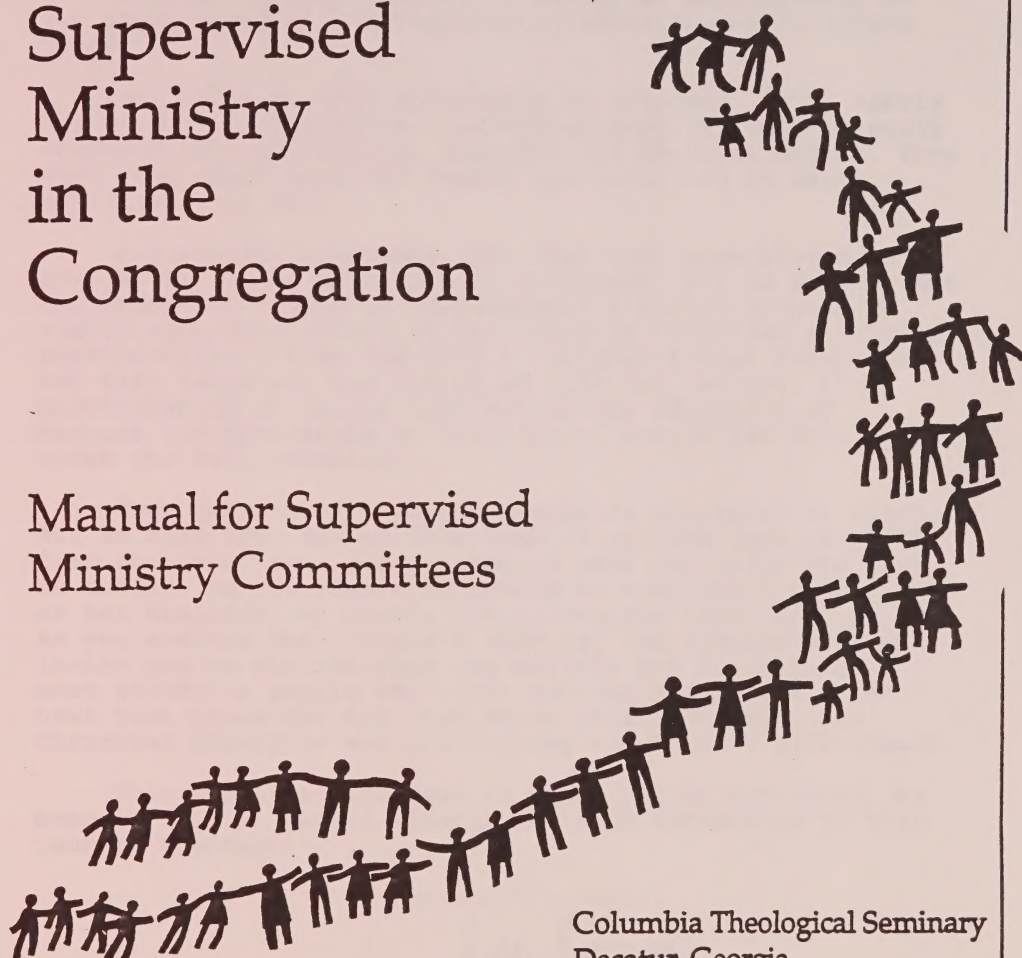
The Internal Revenue Service considers payments to students for services performed (including scholarships paid, the receipt of which is contingent upon the performance of services) to constitute taxable wages. This encompasses payments to seminary students serving in teaching congregations for internships.

Accordingly, the Treasurer of a teaching congregation is advised that an intern is to be treated as any other non-ordained employee. Income and F.I.C.A. taxes should be withheld, and Form W-2 should be issued to the interns.

This policy is applicable regardless of whether any portion of the student intern's income is provided to the teaching congregation from seminary scholarship funds.

Supervised Ministry in the Congregation

Manual for Supervised
Ministry Committees



Columbia Theological Seminary
Decatur, Georgia

COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Welcome to this venture in Christian discipleship as you participate in the theological education of an intern pastor.

Your role in this internship is integral. It is simply not adequate today for a theological seminary only to equip students with theological insights and pastoral skills. They must also experience the Church and learn how to serve effectively in it.

Lay persons sometimes feel that they have little to contribute to the education of ministers. But to prepare men and women for a life of professional ministry without a significant involvement of the laity is to foster a kind of professional elitism and lack of relevance that simply does not make sense for the church in this day. Without the participation of people like you in the education of pastors, no internship or theological curriculum will ever reach its full potential.

Your contribution to the student's education is vital. But we hope that during this time of service that you will find that you, too, are growing in your own faith and life in Christ. As you enable an intern to understand better his or her ministry, we invite you to examine your own ministry. As you explore the student's theology and commitments, we invite you to explore your own beliefs and priorities. The most effective people who serve on committees such as this have been those who are open about their own growth as Christian disciples and are willing to share it with others.

This manual is intended to guide you in your task. We hope it will be useful. Thanks for your leadership in this journey together!

Sincerely yours,



R. Leon Carroll, Jr.
Director of Supervised Ministry



THE CONGREGATIONAL INTERNSHIP

Columbia Theological Seminary offers two basic congregational internships in the Master of Divinity degree program: a required, ten-week summer internship (at the end of the first year of study), and an elective year-long internship (after the second year). Both are designed to serve an integrative function, enabling students to put into practice what has been studied in biblical, historical, theological, and pastoral disciplines.

There are four components to the internship:

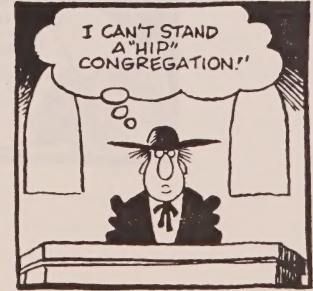
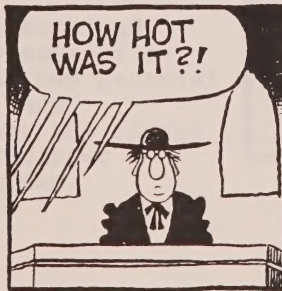
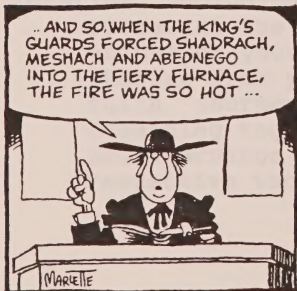
1. **The Experience in Ministry.** The actual activities of the Intern Pastor are planned by the student and the Supervising Pastor. These experiences in ministry are designed with four major concerns in mind:
 - a. the learning goals of the intern;
 - b. the needs of the congregation;
 - c. the expectations of the supervising pastor;
and
 - d. the requirements of the Seminary.

All four of these concerns are explored during the first two weeks of the internship, and a written **Learning Covenant** is prepared which serves as a guide for the internship. This covenant should be shared with the Supervising Ministry Committee. As the time of ministry progresses, the covenant can be modified as necessary so that it is maintained as a relevant, functioning tool to guide the learning process.

2. **Supervision.** A congregational internship must have an on-site, ordained supervising pastor approved by the Seminary. In addition to informal, day-to-day oversight of the intern's activities in ministry, the Supervising Pastor meets with the intern weekly in a structured time for reflecting upon experiences in ministry.

The Supervised Ministry Committee provides a second dimension to supervision, and this manual will suggest appropriate ways of carrying out that responsibility.

3. **Evaluation.** Written evaluation of the student's work is made by the Supervising Pastor on forms provided by the Seminary. For summer internships, this is done once at the end of the time of service. For year-long internships, this is done at the mid-point and at the end of the ministry period. In both types of internships, input from the Supervised Ministry Committee is strongly encouraged to guide the Supervisor in preparing a fair and accurate evaluation.
4. **Academic Requirements.** The intern is also expected to satisfy academic requirements of the Seminary. In the summer internship a sermon and an "Understanding of Ministry" paper must be submitted to the Seminary. In the year-long internship, students must return to the Seminary campus for a two-week interdisciplinary course in January and a one-week evaluation course in August, at the end of the internship.



THE SUPERVISED MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Purposes. The congregation's Supervised Ministry Committee serves three basic purposes:

- (1) to provide support to the intern, including:
 - welcoming the student and facilitating his or her entry into the community;
 - interpreting to others in the congregation the role of the intern pastor
 - being responsive to the human needs of the intern, such as accepting and affirming the intern when mistakes are made, celebrating new growth and insights that come; and
 - inviting the intern (and family) into a common life and ministry.
- (2) to give "feedback" and evaluation to the intern about his or her ministry, including:
 - monitoring progress in the learning covenant;
 - reflecting on specific events in the intern's ministry; and
 - providing constructive criticism about the intern's work.
- (3) to explore the meaning of your individual and corporate vocation, including:
 - reviewing the history and values of your congregation;
 - sharing from your own personal faith journeys; and
 - examining together the issues and learnings from your respective vocations.



Committee Composition and Function.

- (1) **Membership** - Normally the committee is appointed by the Supervising Pastor and approved by the Session or other governing body of the congregation. The size of most committees ranges from 4 to 7 persons. It should be representative of a broad cross-section of the congregation.
- (2) **Criteria for Selection** - Those selected to serve on the committee should be persons who:
 - have a strong sense of their own life as ministry;
 - are involved in and concerned about the congregation;
 - are willing to share personally and spiritually;
 - are able to listen and ask questions; and
 - are able to utilize educational processes.
- (3) **The Moderator** of the committee should be a person with good group process skills and able to keep the committee focused. Neither the pastor or the intern should serve as moderator of the committee.
- (4) **The Supervising Pastor** is encouraged to participate actively in committee meetings. He or she should help as a resource for the work of the committee, helping to organize the committee and suggesting helpful processes for the group's work. Nevertheless, the pastor should avoid being overly intrusive or dominating.
- (5) **Frequency of Meetings.** It is recommended that the committee meet once prior to the beginning of the internship (organizational meeting) and again near the end of the internship to prepare a final evaluation. Beyond that, the committee should meet at least every two weeks during a summer internship, and monthly for a year-long internship.
- (6) **Confidentiality.** Members of the committee must take special care to see that sensitive information about the intern and others in the community is kept confidential. Failure to observe this rule can compromise the value of this important teaching/learning process and cause much pain.
- (7) **Accountability.** The committee is responsible to the Session or other governing body of the congregation, and it is appropriate that periodic reports be made to them.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Prior to the intern's arrival:

The organizational meeting of the committee, held prior to the beginning of the internship, should focus on several significant tasks:

- a. Review the content of this manual and organize for the work of the committee.
- b. Get to know each other better in order to function effectively as a team. Specific activities that may be found helpful for this task are:
 - (1) sharing briefly about yourself, your vocation, your current involvements in church and community;
 - (2) expressing what prompted you to serve on this committee;
- c. Discuss the following:
 - what does it feel like to be a member of this congregation? What are you most excited about? Frustrated about? What is it like to be a visitor here?
 - what do you see to be the main roles of the pastor(s)? Of the laity? How are these different and similar?
 - what do lay persons have to offer to seminarians through such a committee as this?
- d. Review what is expected of the intern. (The committee may want to review the "Church Information Form" submitted to the Seminary by the pastor.)
- e. Make plans to welcome the intern to the congregation and to help him or her to "get settled" in the new context.



Soon after the intern arrives:

The first meeting with the intern should take place as early as possible after the intern arrives, preferably in the first week. The agenda for this meeting should include:

- a. Reviewing the intern's learning covenant established by the supervising pastor and intern.
- b. Hearing the intern's life story and faith pilgrimage.
- c. Telling the intern (and each other) the story of the recent history of the congregation. A suggested exercise for doing this is found on p. 12 of this manual.
- d. Establishing the dates of future committee meetings.

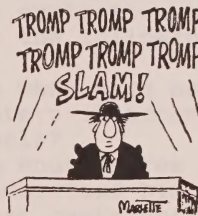


Ongoing meetings for study and reflection:

These meetings, scheduled at regular intervals throughout the internship, should focus on one of the following:

OPTION ONE: Critical reflections on a specific ministry event e.g., a case study, a sermon, a lesson plan, or some other pastoral experience which raises questions or invites feedback.

- a. When this agenda is selected, the intern should present a **written report in advance** to each member of the committee, including clearly stated questions the intern has about the event.
- b. In reviewing such events with the intern, members of the committee should utilize the principles of effective feedback found on p. 10.
- c. There is often a wide variety of issues which come into focus when discussing an intern's report on pastoral events. The article, "Basic Levels of Supervisory Concerns" (p. 13-14) may enable the committee to be conscious of these various concerns and to be more intentional about the direction of the reflections.



OPTION TWO: Critical reflections on the life and ministry of the congregation.

Although each congregation is unique, there are several useful methods that may be utilized in understanding any congregation. Learning about your congregation will enable the intern to understand more about other congregations he or she may serve in the future.

The article, "Methods for Studying the Congregation," (pp. 11-12) suggests several specific processes by which the intern and committee might look together at various aspects of the congregation.

OTHER OPTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE'S AGENDA:

In addition to the items noted above, the committee should also include the following on its agenda:

- Monitoring the Learning Covenant** - a periodical review of progress made by the intern on his or her learning goals.
- Identifying Learnings** - conclude each meeting by asking everyone briefly to identify any new learnings that have emerged from the discussions of that meeting.
- Praying Together** for each other, the congregation, the world.

The final meeting with the intern, scheduled near the end of the internship, is a time for the general evaluation of both the intern and the congregation's intern program.

- a. For the evaluation of the intern the Seminary provides a comprehensive evaluation form. While it is the responsibility of the Supervising Pastor to complete and return this instrument, it is important for the committee to provide input into the evaluation process.
- b. For the evaluation of the congregation's intern program the following may be helpful:
 - (1) In what ways have we helped or hindered the intern in accomplishing his or her learning goals?
 - (2) To what degree have we helped the intern to understand his or her responsibilities?
 - (3) What contribution have we made to the intern's understanding the ministry of the laity?
 - (4) How effective have we been in interpreting the intern program to the congregation?
 - (5) How effective have we been in "telling the truth in love" (feedback) and in providing personal support to the intern?
 - (6) How effective have we been in helping the intern understand our congregation?
 - (7) What changes would we make with future interns?
 - (8) What have been our personal learnings and joys through the work of this committee?

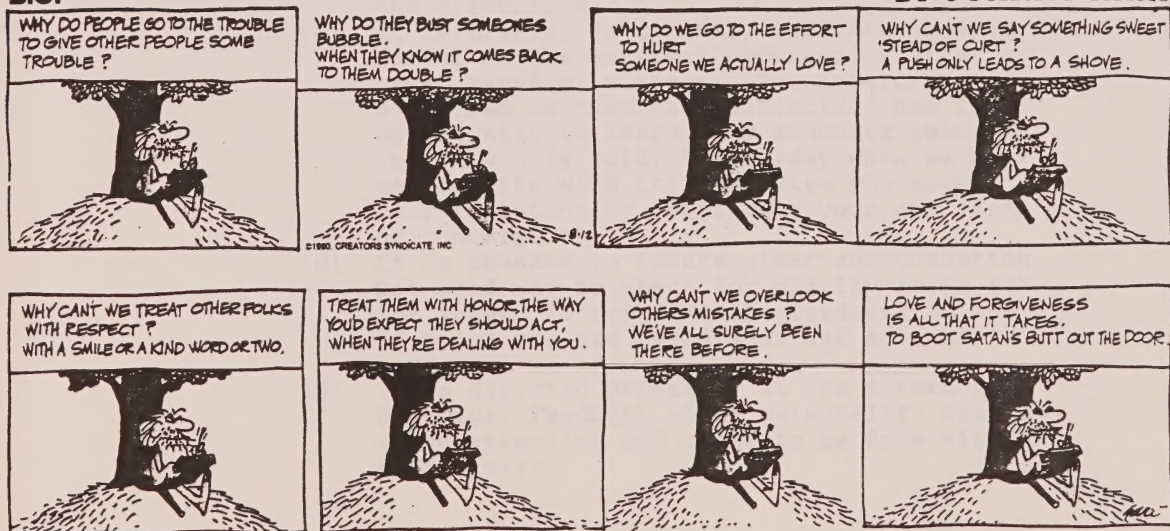
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B.C.

BY JOHNNY HART



Resources for Study and Reflection

A. FEEDBACK

Feedback is specific commentary on what one observes about the intern and the way he or she does ministry. It involves describing to the intern how his or her behavior is seen by others and how it effects people and organizations. The purpose of feedback is to help the intern become more effective in ministry.

- (1) Feedback is not useful if it is used to punish the intern, "to get something off our chests," or to show superiority over the intern.
- (2) Both positive and negative feedback are important. The intern can grow not only by hearing about mistakes, but also by hearing about positive actions.
- (3) Characteristics of good feedback:
 - (a) It is **descriptive rather than judgmental**. Avoiding judgemental language reduces the defensiveness of the intern.
 - (b) It is **specific rather than general**. To describe the intern as "bossy" or "domineering" is not as useful as to say, "This morning when you were leading the class discussion about criminal justice, you appeared to be disturbed by the direction of the discussion."
 - (c) It is **timely**. In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after a given event of ministry. The intern who is described as "lacking initiative" has less opportunity to learn from feedback than the intern who is told, "Yesterday when we were meeting with the committee you seemed very reluctant to contribute your own ideas or concerns."
 - (d) It is **checked** to insure clear communication. One good way to check for clarity is to ask the intern to rephrase the feedback to see if he or she has heard what was actually said.
 - (e) It is directed primarily **at the intern's behavior**. Feedback about personality can be ego-destructive and needs to be done with sensitivity.

B. METHODS FOR STUDYING YOUR CONGREGATION

1. Looking at the congregation's PROGRAM:

- A. Ask each member of the committee individually to write down the five programs or activities of the congregation which appear to them to receive the highest priority in the life of the congregation. Have them also list the five that seem to be the most neglected. Follow this with a time of sharing individual listings, discussing differences, and seeking consensus.
- B. Examine the congregation's budget. Discuss which programs appear to receive the greatest allocation of available funds. What does this say about priorities?
- C. Identify those types of members which appear to be most active in the congregation. Which types of members appear to be less involved? Why?

2. Looking at PROCESSES the congregation uses:

- A. Identify one major decision made recently which affected the life of the congregation. Do a step-by-step analysis of how the decision was made, noting who was involved in the decision. Discuss how this is typical or not typical of decision-making in the congregation.
- B. Discuss how the congregation deals with conflicts. Do most conflicts tend to be role conflicts, issue conflicts, or interpersonal conflicts? Identify some recent conflicts that have emerged in the life of the congregation and analyze why differences emerged. How were these conflicts resolved?
- C. Ask each member of the committee to list individually the five most influential members of the congregation (excluding staff). Compare lists, noting reasons why different persons have come to be so influential.

3. Looking at the congregation's SOCIAL CONTEXT:

- A. In advance ask someone on the committee to provide a map of the immediate neighborhood. Post the map so that all can see, and invite the group to develop a detailed description of the

neighborhood. Who lives there? Who works there? What are the major problems of the area? How do the people living and working nearby view the congregation? Probe for other information.

- B. Discuss the following question: How does our social context (our neighborhood, our city or county, our nation) set limits and provide opportunities for our congregation?
- C. Identify which people in the community seem most to live on the margins of this society. Why are they so marginalized? What is the church's relationship with these persons, if any? Why?

4. Looking at the congregation's IDENTITY:

- A. Have the committee tell the history of the congregation. Using a large chalkboard or several sheets of newsprint taped to a wall, draw a long horizontal line through the middle of the surface. At the far right of the line, draw a vertical line and label it "the present". Then invite the group to begin with the present and work backwards into the past, recording their history as they remember it. Note major turning points or achievements, "days of glory", times of crisis or turmoil, families or individuals who made significant contributions. Note also key events that were taking place in the community or world which impacted the congregation's history.
- B. Once the above history is recorded, ask the committee to identify from their story any lasting values which continue today to give shape to the congregation's sense of identity. One way to do this is to have participants complete the sentence, "We are a congregation which..."
- C. Invite the committee to describe the congregation's primary view of the world. Is it a hostile environment to be avoided? a troubled environment in need of transformation? an environment which tends to shape the congregation's own theology?
- D. Ask the committee to make a list of those symbols or special places in the church building which hold special, emotional meaning for many in the congregation. What is behind the "sacred" meaning attached to these symbols and places?

C. BASIC LEVELS OF SUPERVISORY CONCERN

Regardless of the method selected for reporting ministry experiences, there are at least five basic areas of concern appropriate for attention in the supervisory conferences:

1. **Professional Level.** This is the more technical, skill-oriented level used to evaluate the intern's abilities in preaching, teaching, pastoral care, etc. The supervisor or committee might ask questions such as:
 - "In what ways was the intern effective/ineffective in this particular act of ministry?"
 - "What skills were used with obvious competence? What skills were lacking?"
2. **Interpersonal Level.** Here the focus is on the very important realm of human relationship.
 - "How did the intern relate to other persons in this event?"
 - "How did the intern deal with his or her own emotions in this experience?"
 - "How did the intern deal with this conflict situation?"
3. **Systemic Level.** This level deals with the way the intern demonstrates competence in working with organizations and social structures in the church and community.
 - "In what ways did the intern exercise good leadership with the committee?"
 - "How did the intern demonstrate sensitivity to the expectations or traditions of the congregation?"
 - "How did the intern deal with the power struggle going on in this organization?"
4. **Theological Level.** This level examines the way in which the intern integrates his or her theological views with the issues of ministry.
 - "What theological questions emerge from this event? What doctrines are relevant?"
 - "Where does the intern see the redeeming activity of God in this event?"
 - "What biblical events seem parallel to the event being reported by the intern? In what ways are the two similar?"



5. **Vocational Level.** The issue for discussion here is the intern's emerging sense of vocational identity and spiritual formation.

- "What did the intern learn from this experience about his or her call to ministry?"
- "What concept of ministry is demonstrated by the way the intern functioned in this situation?"
- "How comfortable does the intern appear to be in exercising his or her pastoral authority?"
- "How has this experience helped the intern understand his or her spiritual life?"

It is not necessary for all five levels to be discussed in every supervisory conference. Some reports will clearly point to only one or two levels where growth is of critical importance; other reports will beg for dialogue at all five levels. Nevertheless, being aware of these various levels can be very constructive in building the agenda for the conference.

